



**STATE OF MONTANA
DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTIONS
POLICY DIRECTIVE**

Policy No. DOC 1.3.16	Subject: VOLUNTEER SERVICES
Chapter 1: ADMINISTRATION AND MANAGEMENT	Page 1 of 4 and Attachment
Section 3: Human Resource Bureau	Effective Date: Nov. 1, 1996
Signature: /s/ Mike Ferriter, Director	Revision Dates: 11/29/99; 06/14/01; 03/15/05; 10/24/06; 12/26/07

I. POLICY

The Department of Corrections allows volunteers to provide important ancillary services in its facilities and programs for the benefit of staff and offenders. This policy does not apply to persons designated to serve on boards or advisory councils.

II. APPLICABILITY

All divisions, facilities, and programs under Department jurisdiction or contract.

III. DEFINITIONS

Administrator – The administrator ultimately responsible for the division, facility, or program operation and management.

Advocate/Supporter – A person pre-approved by the administrator to provide cash donations, gifts, arts and craft supplies, or comparable products or services for offender use or consumption.

Mentor – A volunteer who provides educational assistance, support, or motivation to offenders on an individual or group basis.

Professional Service Volunteer – An individual who provides a volunteer service that requires a certificate or license by state law, such as an attorney, doctor, or psychologist.

Short-term or Guest Volunteer – A person who provides volunteer services for a single event or within a limited time frame.

Volunteer – Any person who has been approved to provide services for Department programs without compensation.

Volunteer Coordinator – A qualified Department employee responsible for organizing, monitoring, and managing the facility or program volunteer program.

Volunteer Group – Two or more individuals working together to achieve a common goal or provide a regular service in response to an identified need, e.g., Alcoholics Anonymous, Prison Fellowship, Homeward Bound, T.E.A.M. Mentoring.

IV. DEPARTMENT DIRECTIVES

A. Volunteer Programs

1. Volunteer programs encourage increased personal contact for offenders, access to community resources, and increased public awareness. Volunteers assist in meeting the

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needs of staff and offenders by providing a direct service and a valuable contact between correctional programs and the public.

2. Volunteers will not perform duties that are normally performed by paid staff. Recruitment efforts for volunteers typically occur by making contact with potential candidates in the following areas:

- the public or community at large
- the media
- civic organizations
- local educational programs or facilities
- public agencies
- local businesses

3. Students may volunteer without compensation as part of a recognized academic program in accordance with *DOC 1.3.17, Student Interns*.

B. Volunteer Coordinators

1. Each facility or program that uses volunteers will appoint a qualified and trained employee to serve as the volunteer coordinator.
2. The coordinator will arrange for the appropriate training and supervision of all volunteer activities and, where applicable, oversee the recruitment and screening of volunteers in coordination with the Department's Human Resource Bureau.
3. When a volunteer is selected, the coordinator will contact the Human Resource Bureau to arrange for necessary Workers' Compensation coverage and reporting.

C. Eligibility Criteria

1. Applicants for volunteer positions must meet eligibility and screening criteria prior to approval that include, but are not limited to, the following:
 - a. must be 18 years of age or older, or be approved by the administrator, or designee;
 - b. must complete and return a volunteer application form specific to each division, facility, or program; and
 - c. must complete and sign an Authorization to Release Information form that allows the Department's Human Resource Bureau to conduct background and criminal records checks on all applicants.
3. Relatives or victims of offenders may not provide volunteer services unless approved by the administrator, or designee.
4. Current Department employees must obtain the expressed, written, permission of their supervisors before they are assigned or trained for volunteer positions.
5. Volunteers may not be placed on an offender's visiting list at a facility where they offer volunteer services.

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6. Volunteers may not correspond with offenders unless pre-approved by the facility administrator, or designee. If approved, an established procedure will be developed by designated security and program staff.
7. Individuals previously under the care, custody, or supervision of the Department may be accepted as volunteers on a case-by-case basis, subject to the approval of the administrator, or designee, and in accordance with *DOC Policy 1.3.4, Employee Selection Guidelines*.
8. Individuals may only act in the capacity of a professional service volunteer when they are certified or licensed to do so and only with the written approval of the administrator, or designee.

D. Training and Supervision

1. Volunteers must be trained on all rules and procedures important to their effective functions, and receive orientation and refresher training specific to the area, program, or facility where they will provide services.
2. Volunteers with direct and/or incidental contact with offenders must receive documented PREA training during volunteer orientation in accordance with *DOC 1.3.14, Prison Rape Elimination Act of 2003*.
3. Each facility or program will address the orientation and supervision of volunteers assigned to work with special needs offenders, such as mentally impaired or developmentally disabled offenders.
4. Volunteers must agree to abide by all rules, obligations, and written responsibilities by signing the *Volunteer Service Agreement* ([see Attachment](#)).
5. Short-term and guest volunteers may receive an abbreviated orientation or facility or program policies/procedures; however, the volunteer expectations must be clearly stated in writing.
6. Each administrator, or designee, will ensure that volunteers are provided supervision appropriate to their work settings.

E. Volunteer Transportation

1. Volunteers may travel in, but not drive, Department or assigned government vehicles.
2. Under no circumstances will volunteers transport offenders in their personal vehicles.
3. The administrator may authorize pre-approved volunteers in good standing with the facility to provide transportation to adult offenders upon their release from prison.

F. Recognition

Programs or facilities utilizing volunteers are encouraged to provide special recognition for participants who exhibit extraordinary commitment or performance. Recognition can be

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achieved through recommendations for federal, state, or local awards or letters of appreciation, institutional recognition events, etc.

G. Termination

The administrator, or designee, may suspend or terminate an individual volunteer or volunteer program at any time with or without cause.

V. CLOSING

Provisions of this policy not required by statute will be followed unless the provisions conflict with negotiated labor contracts, which will take precedence to the extent applicable.

Questions concerning this policy should be directed to the appropriate administrator.

VI. REFERENCES

- A. *2-15-112 MCA, Duties and Powers of Department Heads; 53-1-202 MCA, Department of Corrections*
- B. *DOC Policies 1.1.3, Organization and Responsibility; 1.3.4, Employee Selection Guidelines; 3.1.5, Entrance Procedures and Detainment of Non-offenders; 1.3.14, Prison Rape Elimination Act of 2003; 1.3.17, Student Interns*

VII. ATTACHMENT

Volunteer Service Agreement

DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTIONS

VOLUNTEER SERVICE AGREEMENT

I, _____ (*print name*), do agree to the following conditions of providing volunteer services for the Department of Corrections:

1. I agree to engage only in those assignments or activities that have been assigned or authorized by the volunteer coordinator.
2. I will not present myself as a representative or paid employee of the Department.
3. I do not expect to receive monetary compensation for my services.
4. I agree to avoid undue familiarity. If an offender has a problem that is beyond the scope of my position, I will direct the offender to the appropriate agency staff. I will not pursue a relationship with an offender that is outside my assigned responsibility.
5. I agree to bring nothing in or take anything out for any offender except work materials that have been approved by the volunteer coordinator.
6. I will report without delay to the volunteer coordinator any condition, activity, or unusual behavior that may be unethical, illegal, dangerous or potentially dangerous.
7. I agree to meet attendance and performance requirements.
8. I understand that I am responsible, and therefore liable, for my own actions, and agree to use due care and caution when providing volunteer services.
9. I agree not to report for volunteer activities under the influence of alcohol or drugs.
10. I agree to accept only those assignments and engage in only those activities that have been assigned or authorized and that supplement, but do not supplant, the work of classified Department employees.
11. I understand that offenders under Department jurisdiction have been convicted of felony criminal activity, and that any offender I may have contact with may attempt to take unfair advantage of me. If taken hostage, I understand that the same rules apply to me as to any Department employee.
12. I understand that my status as a volunteer may be suspended or terminated at any time with or without any reason and at the complete discretion of the Department.
13. I have received a copy of *DOC Policy 1.3.16*, have read it, and agree to be bound by its terms.

VOLUNTEER'S SIGNATURE

DATE